

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

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AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

AMCONSUL IBADAN

AMCONSUL KADUNA

AMCONSUL LUMUMBASHI

UNCLAS ABIDJAN 7135

USIAC

AGENCY FOR ICS/CA, IAA, BCICA

STATE FOR CU/AF

KADUNA PASS KANO

LONDON FOR RRO O'CONNOR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJ AFRICA REGIONAL AMERICAN STUDIES
CONFERENCE: ARASC ENDS IN ABIDJAN

1. THE 5TH AND LAST BICENTENNIAL REGIONAL AMERICAN STUDIES CONFERENCE - THE AFRICAN CONFERENCE, ENDED IN ABIDJAN JULY 28 ON A GENERALLY POSITIVE NOTE. THERE WAS AGREEMENT AMONG THE AFRICAN PARTICIPANTS THAT A USEFUL FIRST STEP HAD BEEN TAKEN TOWARDS GREATER COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE BETWEEN AFRICAN SCHOLARS AND THEIR FOREIGN COLLEAGUES. ENDING FOUR DAYS OF INTENSIVE DISCUSSION, ALL OF WHICH WERE PLENARY SESSIONS, THE PARTICIPANTS AGREED TO WORK TOWARDS PUBLICATION OF THE ARASC PROCEEDINGS AND PAPERS AS A FIRST STEP TOWARDS GREATER CONTACT AMONG THEMSELVES. ALL 39 PARTICIPANTS AND OBSERVERS AGREED THAT THE SESSIONS HAD BEEN PROFESSIONALLY AND PERSONALLY REWARDING - LARGELY DUE TO THE SERIOUS, OBJECTIVE APPROACH THE PARTICIPANTS TOOK TO EACH SESSION. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION THROUGHOUT THE CONFERENCE WAS CONSISTENTLY HIGH. MANY PARTICIPANTS EXPRESSED SATISFACTION AT THE LACK OF RHETORIC AND IDEOLOGICAL POSTURING - AND ESPECIALLY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT AS THE ARASC PROGRAM COVERED A LARGE NUMBER OF POLITICALLY CONTROVERSIAL AREAS, E.G., "U.S. FOREIGN POLICY IN AFRICAN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT" AND IMPACT OF U.S. MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS IN AFRICA."

2. THE LAST SESSION - AN "AFRICAN PARTICIPANT ONLY" PLENARY SESSION DISCUSSED THE FEASIBILITY OF BEGINNING SOME TYPE OF FORMAL AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES ORGANIZATION. IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE PARTICIPANTS THAT EXISTING POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES AND THE INABILITY OF SOME PARTICIPANTS TO SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THEIR UNIVERSITIES OR GOVERNMENTS WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATIONS ON THE ISSUE OF AN AMERICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION MADE ANY IMMEDIATE ACTION IMPOSSIBLE. PUBLICATION OF THE ARASC PROCEEDINGS WAS AGREED TO DURING THE FINAL SESSION.

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3. A CONVIVIAL CLOSING BANQUET ENDED ARASC. PROF DORIS FRIEDENSOHN, REPRESENTING THE AMERICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION AND BCICA, PROF E.J. ALAGOA, UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, REPRESENTING VICE-CHANCELLOR AJAYI, UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, AND ARASC SECRETARY B. A. AGIRI, EXTENDED WARM THANKS TO ALL INVOLVED IN ARASC. AN ESPECIALLY WARM, PERSONAL TRIBUTE

TO DR LETTITIA BROWN, THE BCICA ARASC REPRESENTATIVE, WAS OFFERED BY PROFESSOR ALAGOA WHO SAID, "MEMBERS OF THE ARASC REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE HAD THE HONOR OF DR BROWN'S FRIENDSHIP AND SHARED A RESPECT FOR HER SCHOLARSHIP." PROF ALAGOA ASKED THAT A FULL TEXT OF HIS REMARKS BE PREPARED AND FORWARDED TO DR BTOWN. THIS IS BEING DONE. DURING AND AFTER THE BANQUET INFORMAL, BUT NEVERTHELESS CONSISTENT EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST IN FUTURE MEETINGS OF THIS TYPE EMERGED. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT THE PERSONAL CONTACT AND FRIENDSHIP THE AFRICAN SCHOLLARS DEVELOPED AT ARASC WILL LEAD TO FURTHER FORMAL MEETINGS..

4. ADDITIONAL, IN-DEPTH ARASC REPORTING WILL FOLLOW FROM THE AGENCY.
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